

****ATTENTION****

This document is provided for historical purposes only.

Documents contained in the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife Document & Publication Archive may contain dated and/or incorrect information. The WDFW Document & Publication Archive is provided as a service to those interested in the history of fish and wildlife management in Washington State.



REGION 1

North 8702 Division St.
Spokane, WA 99218
TEL. (509) 456-4082



NORTHEAST WASHINGTON

BLACK BEAR HUNTING

Northeast Washington has one of the highest bear populations in the state, allowing an average annual harvest of 300 bears. The average age of harvested bears is about six years old, indicating that at least half are large, mature animals.

Because northeastern Washington also supports the state's major grizzly population, bear hunters must be sure of identification—pass up any bear that cannot be identified with certainty. (Grizzlies are listed as endangered and protected by law.)

The black bear harvest season traditionally opens in early September and continues through October, with a houndsmen's pursuit season earlier; check the current hunting rules pamphlet for dates of all seasons.

Eighty percent of the bears

taken are by boot hunters in huckleberry fields, old orchards, or while deer hunting. Hound hunters generally take the rest of the harvest. In good huckleberry production years the bears are more concentrated and hunting is usually easier; otherwise the bears are more scattered as they forage for other food, and hunting can be tougher.

The majority of bear-hunting land is managed by the Colville National Forest, so campgrounds are plentiful; maps are available at the ranger stations in Republic, Kettle Falls, Newport, Sullivan Lake, and at the forest supervisor's office at 695 South Main St., Colville, Wa. 99114.

Ferry County produces about 70 bears in the yearly harvest. Houndsmen use the abundant

road systems while boot hunters work the clear-cuts up high or the natural huckleberry fields. Open slopes with chokecherry draws are also a good bet.

Stevens County produces about 130 bears in the yearly harvest, with Unit 105 being one of the best areas. The average age of harvested bears is less here than in other counties, indicating higher hunting pressure on this population. The numerous abandoned homesteads with old apple orchards, where baiting is popular, contribute to this high harvest. Early in the season, when berries are ripe, many bear hunters hike or horseback ride into the high elevations to scan huckleberry fields or clear-cuts. Most of this type of hunting is done on the mountain range that runs along the Ste-

BLACK BEAR HUNTING

vens-Pend Oreille County line, with typical areas being Chewelah Peak, Calispell Peak, and Abercrombie Mountain. Huckleberry Mountain has also been good.

Pend Oreille County produces about 100 bears in the yearly harvest. But because they are the oldest, biggest bears in the region, that is probably a light harvest of the available population. This area of rugged, brushy country with few roads allows more bears to escape hunters, and so the aver-

age age of harvested bears is about seven years. Houndsmen lose dogs and boot hunters can't see bears in the heavy brush. But the challenge keeps some hunters coming back to areas like Crowell Ridge, Salmo Mountain, Monumental Mountain, Molybdenite Mountain, and North and South Baldy Mountains. Hunting over bait or natural foods in the LeClerc Creek drainage, and any clearcuts with any kind of berry production are also popular and productive.

The Washington Department of Wildlife will provide equal opportunities to all potential and existing employees without regard to race, creed, color, sex, sexual orientation, religion, age, marital status, national origin, disability, or Vietnam Era Veteran's status.

The department receives Federal Aid for fish and wildlife restoration. The department is subject to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin or handicap. If you believe you have been discriminated against in any department program, activity, or facility, or if you want further information about Title VI or Section 504, write to: Office of Equal Opportunity, U.S. Department of Interior, Washington, D.C. 20240, or Washington Department of Wildlife, 600 N. Capitol Way, Olympia, WA 98504.